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March 3, 2021

The Honorable Cheryl L. Johnson
Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Johnson:

If enacted in its current form, H.R. 1, *For the People Act of 2021*, would establish a 6-to-1 matching system on small dollar donations up to \$200 for House candidates who meet specified eligibility requirements and make specified certifications. This voluntary system has been incorrectly referred to as “taxpayer-funded” or “publicly-financed.” It is neither. The matching funds come entirely from a “Freedom From Influence” Fund created by the bill. The sole source of the money in this Fund is an assessment paid on federal fines, penalties, and settlements in connection with the commission of certain tax crimes and corporate malfeasance.

To be absolutely clear on this point, Congresswoman Elaine Luria and I offered an amendment to H.R. 1, stating expressly that “[n]o tax payer funds may be deposited into the Fund.” It was adopted and incorporated into the bill. I have no doubt opponents of the bill will continue to allege that the bill creates a taxpayer-funded or publicly-financed system, but those claims are false. Under H.R. 1, no American will see the federal taxes they pay be used to support a candidate for House office. Any financial contributions they do make to a candidate will remain purely voluntary.

In addition, I filed a House resolution, H. Res. 177, that was adopted by the House. H. Res. 177 authorizes a candidate for the House, or a current Member of the House, to file a statement with the House Clerk “indicating whether or not the candidate or Member intends to be a participating candidate” in this small dollar financing system.

I write to express my intent not to participate in this small dollar financing system in 2022 or thereafter. While I strongly support the goal of this system, which is to reduce the disproportionate influence of wealthy corporations on our political process and to mitigate the severe damage done by the pro-dark money *Citizens United* decision, I cannot in good conscience agree to fund my campaign through a process—however well-intentioned—that I voted to create.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie'.

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress